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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/616,399	07/09/2003	Edward E. Horton III	713-23-CIP	9213

22145 7590 04/19/2005

KLEIN, O'NEILL & SINGH
2 PARK PLAZA
SUITE 510
IRVINE, CA 92614

EXAMINER

SINGH, SUNIL

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3673

DATE MAILED: 04/19/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/616,399

Applicant(s)

HORTON, EDWARD E.

Examiner

Sunil Singh

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 25-44 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 25-31 and 39-44 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 32-38 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Newly submitted claims 25-31 and 39-44 are directed to an invention that is independent or distinct from the invention originally claimed for the following reasons: Original claims were directed to a floating platform included limitations such as manifold and low pressure jumper and not to guide means as now presented.

Since applicant has received an action on the merits for the originally presented invention, this invention has been constructively elected by original presentation for prosecution on the merits. Accordingly, claims 25-31 and 39-44 are withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. See 37 CFR 1.142(b) and MPEP § 821.03.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 32,33,35,36,38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Daniell '673 in view of Allen et al. (US 6092483).

Daniell discloses a riser system for use in a deep draft floating platform (20), the riser system comprising a buoyancy apparatus (92,100a,100) having an upper portion (100) and a lower portion guided within the floating platform, the buoyancy apparatus having

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an upper surface (100); a well deck (100) provided on the upper surface of the buoyancy apparatus; at least two vertical risers (90) supported by the buoyancy apparatus and attached to the well (100) deck and extending down through the buoyancy apparatus for connection to a seabed wellhead. A tendon assembly is considered as one of member (90). Daniell discloses the invention substantially as claimed. However, Daniell lacks upper and lower guides. Allen et al. teach upper and lower guides ((62,64), see Figs. 6,7). It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Daniell to include upper and lower guides as taught by Allen et al. in order control relative motion between the buoyancy member and the spar. With regards to claim 38, it is notoriously conventional to connect the risers/tendons sections with casing joints.

4. Claims 34 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Daniell in view of Allen et al. as applied to claim 32 above, and further in view of White et al. or Pepin-Lehalleur et al. (US 5147148, 4895481).

Daniell (once modified) discloses the invention substantially as claimed. However, the (once modified) Daniell lacks a coupling means for the risers/tendon. White et al. and Pepin-Lehalleur et al. both teach a coupling means for risers/tendon (see Figs. 12,13; Figs. 2-7B, respectively). It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to further modify the (once modified) Daniell to include the coupling means as taught by either White et al. or Pepin-Lehalleur et al. since this would prevent the risers/tendon from clashing together.

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5. Claims 37 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Daniell in view of Allen et al. as applied to claim 32 above, and further in view of Horton (US 4740109).

Daniell (once modified) discloses the invention substantially as claimed. However, the (once modified) Daniell lacks a plurality of interconnected buoyancy members. Horton '109 teaches a plurality of interconnected buoyancy members (see Fig. 21). It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to further modify the (once modified) Daniell by substituting the buoyancy means as taught by Horton '109 for the buoyancy means disclosed by Daniell since such an arrangement allows for individual repairs.

6. Claims 32-38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Danazcko et al. '238 in view of Allen et al. '483.

With regards to claims, 32-34, 37, Danazcko et al. discloses a riser system for use in a deep draft floating platform (2), the riser system comprising a buoyancy apparatus (38) having an upper portion (34) and a lower portion guided within the floating platform, the buoyancy apparatus having an upper surface (34); a well deck (34) provided on the upper surface of the buoyancy apparatus; at least two vertical risers (32) supported by the buoyancy apparatus and attached to the well (34) deck and extending down through the buoyancy apparatus for connection to a seabed wellhead. A tendon assembly is considered as one of member (32). A central guide member (40). Risers/tendon are coupled by (80). Plurality of interconnected buoys ((38), see Fig. 1). Danazcko discloses the invention substantially as claimed. However, Danazcko lacks upper and

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lower guides. Allen et al. teach upper and lower guides ((62,64), see Figs. 6,7). It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Danazcko by substituting upper and lower guides as taught by Allen et al. for the central guide (40) of Danazcko in order to more effectively control relative motion between the buoyancy member and the spar.

With regards to claim 38, it is notoriously conventional to connect the risers/tendons sections with casing joints.

With regards to claim 35 it would have been considered obvious design choice to have uncoupled riser/tendon.

With regards to claim 36, it would have been considered obvious to substitute a single buoyancy member of a plurality of buoyancy members.

In order to reduce a lengthy office action, examiner puts applicant on notice that claims 32-38 are rejected by Hunter '321 in a similar manner as above rejection(s) set forth by Daniell. Also, claims 32-38 are rejected by Horton (US 4702321) in a similar manner as above rejection(s) set forth by Danazcko et al.

Response to Arguments

7. Applicant's arguments filed 1/28/05 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant's argument(s) with regards to claims 25-31 and 39-44 are moot since such claims have been restricted by original presentation. Applicant's argument(s) with regards to claims 32-38 are moot in view of new grounds of rejection(s).

Conclusion

8. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sunil Singh whose telephone number is (571) 272-7051. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday 10:30 AM - 7:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Heather Shackelford can be reached on (571) 272-7049. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Sunil Singh
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3673

SUNIL SINGH
PRIMARY PATENT EXAMINER



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4/15/05